

Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of the Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at Westmont College

Professional Services Division

March 11, 1998

Overview of This Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the Accreditation Team visit conducted at Westmont College. The report of the team presents the findings based upon reading the Institutional Self-Study Reports, review of supporting documentation and interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, an accreditation recommendation is made for the institution.

Accreditation Recommendations

- (1) The Team recommends that, based on the attached Accreditation Team Report, the Committee on Accreditation make the following accreditation decision for Westmont College and both of its credential programs:

ACCREDITATION

On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to recommend candidates for the following Credentials:

- Multiple and Single Subject CLAD Credentials

- (2) Staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Westmont College be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Westmont College be placed on the schedule of accreditation visits for the 2003-2004 academic year.

Background Information

Westmont College is an independent, residential, four-year Christian college offering B.A. and B.S. degrees in 25 liberal arts and sciences majors. Its program emphasizes intellectual, personal, and spiritual growth and features cross-cultural studies, internships, nine pre-professional programs, multiple and single subject credential programs, leadership development, and study programs at home and abroad. The college has a student-faculty ratio of 15 to 1 and an average class size of 22.

Founded in Los Angeles in 1940, the college moved to Santa Barbara in 1945. The college was developed on a 133-acre campus in Montecito, an estate area of Santa Barbara located between the Pacific Ocean and the Santa Ynez Mountains. Approximately 60 percent of the college's 1200 students are women, 40 percent are men, 11 percent are from minority groups, and 3 percent are international students. Eighty-five percent of the students live in the five residence halls on campus or the apartment complex off campus.

Beyond the classroom students may participate in a creative and performing arts program, volunteer for 20 student-led outreach programs, gain experience through a variety of internship programs, and complete in an intramural program.

Preparation for the Accreditation Visit

The Commission staff consultant was assigned to the institution in Spring 1996 and met with institutional leadership initially around that time. Over the next two years, there was a consultant staff meeting with faculty, program directors and institutional administration. The meeting led to decisions about team size, team configuration, standards to be used, format for the institutional self-study report, interview schedule, logistical and organizational arrangements. In addition, telephone, e-mail and regular mail communication was maintained between the staff consultant and institutional representatives. The Team Leader, Dr. Marsha Savage was selected in August 1997. The team size was agreed upon in March 1997.

Preparation of the Institutional Self-Study Report

The Institutional Self-Study Report was prepared beginning with responses to the Common Standards. These responses were developed in reference to both programs and for the unit as a whole. This was followed by a separate response to the General Standards. The institution decided to use option three (General Program Standards) in the *Accreditation Framework* for both programs, Multiple Subject CLAD and Single Subject CLAD.

Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team

Decisions about the structure and size of the team were made cooperatively between the Education Department chairman, education faculty and the Commission Consultant. It was agreed that there would be a team of three consisting of a Team Leader, and two team members. The Commission Consultant selected the team members to participate in the review. Team members were selected because of their expertise, experience, and adaptability, and trained in the use of the *Accreditation Framework*.

Intensive Evaluation of Program Data

Prior to the accreditation visit, team members received copies of the appropriate institutional reports and information from Commission staff on how to prepare for the visit. The COA Team Leader and members examined the college responses to the Common Standards and the General Standards. The on-site phase of the review began on Monday, March 9, 1998. The team arrived on Monday afternoon and begin their deliberations with one another. It included a review of the accreditation procedures and organizational arrangements for the COA team members. The institution sponsored a dessert reception on Monday evening to provide an orientation to the institution.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, March 10 - 11, the team collected data from interviews and reviewed institutional documents according to procedures outlined in the *Accreditation Handbook*. There was extensive consultation among the team members with much sharing of information. Lunch on Tuesday and Wednesday was spent sharing data that had been gathered from interviews and document review. The entire team met on Tuesday evening to discuss progress the first day and share information about findings. Wednesday evening was set aside for additional team meetings and the writing of the team report.

Preparation of the Accreditation Team Report

Pursuant to the *Accreditation Framework*, and the *Accreditation Handbook*, the team prepared a report using a narrative format. For each of the Common Standards, the team made a decision of "Standard Met" or "Standard Not Met." The team had the option of deciding that some of the Common Standards were "Met Minimally" with either Quantitative or Qualitative Concerns. The team then wrote specific narrative comments about each standard providing a finding or rationale for its decision and then outlining perceived Strengths or Concerns relative to the standard.

For the two program areas, the team prepared a narrative report about the general program standards which pointed out any standards that were not met or not fully met and included explanatory information about findings related to the program standards. The team highlighted specific Strengths and Concerns related to the program areas.

The team included some "Professional Comments" at the end of the report for consideration by the institution. These comments are to be considered as consultative advice from the team members, but are not binding on the institution. They are not

considered as a part of the accreditation recommendation of the team.

Accreditation Decisions by the Team

After the report was drafted, the team met Wednesday evening for a final review of the report and a decision about the results of the visit. The team discussed each Common Standard and each General Program Standard and decided on the basis of interviews and program documents that all Common Standards and General Program Standards were fully met.

The team made its accreditation recommendation based on its findings and the policies set forth in the *Accreditation Framework*. In its deliberations, the team decided that several standards in both Common and General sections were worthy of being noted in areas of strength and in some cases, areas of concern. Although some areas of concern were noted in the team report, the overall quality of the programs mitigated the concerns. The team did not feel that the concerns were of sufficient magnitude to place any stipulations on the institution. The team then decided on an accreditation decision for the institution. The options were: "Accreditation," "Accreditation with Technical Stipulations," "Accreditation with Substantive Stipulations" or "Denial of Accreditation." After thorough discussion, the team decided to recommend the status of "**Accreditation.**" The recommendation for "Accreditation" was based on the unanimous agreement of the team.

**CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON TEACHER CREDENTIALING
COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION - ACCREDITATION TEAM REPORT**

Institution: Westmont College

Dates of Visit: March 9-12, 1998

**Accreditation Team
Recommendation:** ACCREDITATION

Rationale:

The team recommendation for Accreditation was the result of a review of the Institutional Self Study Report, a review of additional supporting documents available during the visit, and interviews with administrators, faculty, students, local school personnel and other individuals professionally associated with the unit. The decision pertaining to the accreditation status of the unit was based upon the following:

1. Common Standards - The Common Standards were first reviewed one by one and then voted upon by the entire team. All were judged to have been fully met.
2. General Standards - The General Standards were first reviewed one by one and then voted upon by the entire team. All were judged to have been fully met.
3. Overall Recommendation - The decision to recommend Accreditation was, in part, based on team consensus that all Common Standards were met. Although some areas of concern are noted in this report, the overall quality of the programs is good. Furthermore, the team determined that even though there were a few minor concerns, there were compensating strengths in the program area and that a stipulation should not be placed on the institution. Compensating strengths for this program included consistent reports from employers that graduates were well prepared, competent, and effective. The team concluded that both credential programs were effective and generally of high quality. Therefore, the team reached the decision that the overall evidence clearly supported the above accreditation recommendation.

Team Leader: Marsha K. Savage
California Baptist College

Team Member: Jan Ackerman
Rio Real School District (retired)

Team Member: Larry Christiansen
Kern High School District

DATA SOURCES

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED			DOCUMENTS REVIEWED	
4	Program Faculty	X	Catalog	
4	Institutional Administration	X	Institutional Self Study	
37	Candidates	X	Course Syllabi	
23	Graduates	X	Candidate Files	
14	Employers of Graduates	X	Fieldwork Handbook	
27	Supervising Practitioners	X	Follow-up Survey Results	
4	Advisors		Needs Analysis Results	
18	School Administrators	X	Information Booklet	
1	Credential Analyst	X	Field Experience Notebook	
8	Advisory Committee	X	Schedule of Classes	
		X	Advisement Documents	
		X	Faculty Vitae	
			Other (Name)	

Common Standards

Standard 1

Educational Leadership

Standard Met

The educational unit has effective leadership articulating a clear vision that is respected by the entire college community as well as throughout the public and private school communities with whom they interact. The current department chair has been in this position for over 20 years. This consistency in leadership and the small size of the department enable necessary changes to be made quickly and efficiently.

Strengths

None noted

Concerns

None noted

Standard 2

Resources

Standard Met

Adequate resources are available for support of teaching and advising activities. The Education Department has an equitable budget in relation to other department budgets across campus. A member of the education department serves on the Budget Committee allowing for easier access to the committee.

Classrooms are centrally located and available on demand for department needs. They are equipped with technology that allows regular videotaping of students and are near the curriculum lab so that students have easy access to curriculum materials.

Faculty development grants are available to encourage participation in state and national conferences to help faculty members remain current in educational trends. Funds are also available for faculty assigned time for the development of new programs.

Strengths

None noted.

Concerns

Department chair is required to be on campus during summer months to supervise student teachers yet is not on a longer contract than other faculty.

Standard 3**Faculty****Standard Met**

Students and local school personnel commented regularly on the high quality of faculty, both full-time and adjuncts. They also commented on the fact that faculty remain up-to-date on new techniques and frequently solicit input from them regarding the updating of course syllabi.

The college has made every effort to hire qualified individuals who have public and private school background and experience in teaching in multicultural settings. These faculty are evaluated on a regular basis by all students as well as school personnel. They demonstrate a commitment to quality teaching and model this for their students. Effective teaching is a requirement for tenure and promotion and faculty within the department have been rewarded with both.

Strengths

Faculty are committed to giving one-on-one help to students whenever asked. They know the students both professionally and personally. This relationship allows them to work with schools to coordinate appropriate student teacher placements.

Concerns

None noted.

Standard 4**Evaluation****Standard Met**

Evaluation is both formal and informal. The faculty solicit regular input often on an informal basis because they are in the schools weekly for student teaching supervision. They also collect data from first-year teachers and their employers. In addition, faculty solicit evaluations from all student teachers and master teachers at the conclusion of the student teaching experience. Students evaluate the program, the college supervisor, their master teacher(s) as well as themselves. In addition, the master teachers evaluate the program and the college supervisor.

All college faculty are evaluated systematically each year using the college evaluation form. The form is completed by students enrolled in each course.

Strengths

Faculty use evaluation data to make changes quickly and efficiently.

Concerns

None noted.

Standard 5**Admissions****Standard Met**

Admission criteria are clearly articulated in a number of publications readily available to students. Because of the small number of students, admission to the program is handled quickly and efficiently. The GPA of students admitted to the program is above the median GPA of all seniors enrolled in the institution.

Strengths

None noted.

Concerns

None noted.

Standard 6**Advice and Assistance****Standard Met**

Generally, students are comfortable with the quality of advisement received from members of the faculty. It begins early in the freshman year (or as soon as someone declares that they are interested in education). Yearly meetings are held to keep students informed of program requirements as well as any impending changes. Faculty also meet each semester with students to assist with course scheduling. Principals and master teachers commented on the quality of advisement that not only assists students with daily requirements of teaching but also provides alternative opportunities for students who find that teaching is not for them.

Strengths

Students commented that the credential analyst is a real strength of the program. She is available to advise students when faculty must be in the field supervising student teachers.

Concerns

None noted.

Standard 7**School Collaboration****Standard Met**

The faculty are to be commended for the consistency with which they have established rapport in all school settings. This allows for regular, on-going evaluation of school sites and master teachers resulting in excellent matching of students to master teachers. The open communication among college faculty, school principals, and master teachers facilitates a positive learning experience for student teachers placed at these school sites. Students also commented on the convenience of holding seminars on school campuses.

Strengths

All constituencies commented on the excellent matching of students teachers to master teachers. This is a result of the close working relationship established between the college and the schools.

Concerns

None noted.

Standard 8**Field Supervisors****Standard Met**

Students commented that they are satisfied with site supervisors. Supervisors are selected jointly by college faculty and school personnel. The supervisors are trained one-on-one by college personnel and are provided with a manual to guide their activities.

At the conclusion of the semester, the supervisors are compensated in a variety of ways. These include a monetary stipend as well as athletic passes and library privileges at the college.

Strengths

None noted.

Concerns

None noted.

MULTIPLE SUBJECT/SINGLE SUBJECT CLAD PROGRAMS GENERAL PROGRAM STANDARDS

Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional self-study and supporting documentation as well as completion of interview of candidates, faculty, graduates, employers and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all general program standards are met in the Multiple Subject and Single Subject Programs.

Strengths

Particularly strong components of the programs include:

The Department of Education is to be commended for developing and implementing a CLAD credential for all Single and Multiple Subject candidates. This is now the only program offered in the department and was developed to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population served by the college.

Interviews with principals, employers and master teachers revealed a commitment on the part of college faculty to develop professionals who understand the "whole picture of teaching." This is evident in the way the students dress, in the way they "carry themselves," as well as their involvement in the total school environment. They enter the classroom at a maturity level far superior to students the employers have encountered from other institutions.

Students are well grounded in historical and psychological foundations of education and particularly in lesson and unit planning skills. Master teachers noted that student teachers needed little assistance in preparing their daily lessons.

The department is to be commended for developing a systematic field experience program which begins early in a student's career, continues through all coursework and culminates with a full semester of student teaching. These experiences take place in a variety of classroom settings with diverse populations. These experiences also give students the opportunities to begin working in classrooms on a small scale and progress to full responsibility for the classroom.

Because of the thorough, consistent advisement, principals comment that they rarely have student teachers who have difficulty. Options are available for student teachers who do. This could include extending student teaching opportunities, placing the student teacher in another classroom, or when appropriate, counseling students out of the program.

Faculty are to be commended for being highly accessible to both students and school personnel. In fact, principals report that they view the college faculty as members of their own faculty.

Concerns

None noted.

Professional Comments

(These comments and observations from the team are only for the use of the institution. They are to be considered as consultative advice from team members, but are not binding on the institution. They are not considered as a part of the accreditation recommendation of the team.)

Common Standards

The team suggests purchasing new video recorders for use in videotaping student teachers in the classroom as well as adding to or refining Curriculum Lab materials.

Multiple Subjects Credential Programs

It would be helpful if each college supervisor conducts his/her own seminar at the school site rather than having one supervisor conduct a seminar for all student teachers.